

Prescribed Burning...fire applied in a planned, skillful manner under exacting weather conditions in a definite place to achieve specific results



Prescribed burn, photo courtesy USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service

Purposes

- To improve ecosystem balance
- To control undesirable vegetation
- To stimulate grass seed production on areas managed for harvest
- To reduce excessive accumulation of plant residues
- To reduce hazard from wildfires by preventing buildup of excessive fuel
- To encourage desired changes in plant species composition or to maintain an existing successional stage
- To improve habitat for select wildlife species
- To improve forage quality and quantity for livestock
- To maintain an established plant community

Benefits

Prescribed burning can benefit plant and wildlife species by controlling undesirable vegetation and encouraging native vegetation.

Applications

This practice applies only to the management of warm and cool season grasses and forbs used for pasture land, wildlife land, prairie restoration, and cropland utilized for hay or seed production or areas designated for long-term retirement. In areas where established trees are present and the desire is to maintain them, this practice should not be used.

Design and Installation

A prescribed burn plan includes some important factors to consider, including the fuel moisture condition of the area, fuel type, fuel height, burn complexity, the time of year, wind direction and velocities, and proximity to hazard areas (e.g. homes, roads, forests, etc.). Any of these factors can affect the risks and successes of a burn. In addition, firebreaks should be established around the perimeter of the area prior to initiating a burn.

Landowner Responsibilities

The landowner must obtain a burn plan from a properly trained person. The landowner has the sole responsibility for damages if smoke escapes or causes smoke damage. All prescribed burns will be completed

in accordance with all federal, state, and local regulations. Landowners should notify local officials (e.g. fire departments) before burning.

Maintenance

No operation and maintenance requirements have been identified for this practice.

Relative Cost

Installation	low	● ○ ○ ○ ○	high
Maintenance	low	● ○ ○ ○ ○	high

For Additional Information...

Visit the Indiana NRCS office online at <http://www.in.nrcs.usda.gov/>, see the Indiana Job Sheet or the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) Standard (338) Prescribed Burning, or contact your local USDA-NRCS office.

Local USDA-NRCS contact information